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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, March 21, 1938

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "CHOCOLATE FUDGE AND THE PURE FOOD LAW." From the Food and Drug Administration, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

--ooOoo--

Friends and neighbors, you'd hardly believe it. Our old standby, chocolate fudge -- than which there is no more innocent-looking candy -- chocolate fudge has been declared "guilty."

But don't be unduly alarmed. Only fifteen small lots of fudge -- and other similar candy -- were found guilty. All these lots of candy were the output of one manufacturer. They were seized under the authority of the Pure Food Law, because the candy showed unmistakable evidences of --

Well, after all, we won't go into that. I'm much too fond of chocolate fudge -- when it's good -- to say anything very unkind about it, even when it's bad. And anyway, the guilty fudge bars -- 250 boxes of them -- have now been rounded up and destroyed.

Among other food products seized during January, under authority of the Pure Food Law, were dried fruits and nuts that were either dirty or insect-infested. The dried fruits included nearly a thousand pounds of peaches, and 800 pounds of pears. The nuts included nearly 3,000 pounds of shelled peanuts, between 11 and 12 thousand pounds of cashews, and some walnut meats -- 2,640 pounds of walnut meats, and 100 pounds of mixed nut meats.

Our correspondent with the Federal Food and Drug Administration says the next item seized grieves her very much -- for it's something she likes -- Mexican corn chips. One lot of these corn chips, totaling 8,440 cans, was found to be rancid. The corn chips were attached, and slated for destruction. Consoling thought -- they're off the market, and no homemaker is going to buy them by mistake, and find out later that she's serving rancid corn chips to her guests.

Many other foods were seized during January, for reasons which we won't go into. Of course you can get the entire report, if you want it, from the Food and Drug Administration, Washington, D. C.

But sufficient for us today is the knowledge that all these foods have been removed from interstate commerce, because they violated the Pure Food Law. Three hundred pounds of whitefish, and nearly 3,000 jars and cans of apple butter; 19 cases of tomato catsup, and eight cases of tomato paste showing a high mold content.

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Other foods on the list of seizures included 35 sacks of rabbits, 1600 pounds of skimmilk powder, five cases of clams, in cans; and 26 cases of celery-and-tomato juice.

Another food that got into trouble with the law was egg noodles. When is an egg noodle not an egg noodle? When it contains no egg. And any egg noodle that expects to masquerade as the real thing, by including a bit of artificial color in its make-up, had better think twice, and learn the provisions of the Federal Food and Drugs Act.

Now let's see what other food products had to be removed from interstate commerce -- during January. Some of our old standbys -- potatoes, onions, canned foods. The potatoes, three carloads, were unsuitable for food, because they were affected with the disease known as "net necrosis." And no one of us wants to cut into a good-looking potato and find in the center a network of dark brown fibers.

Besides being affected with "net necrosis," 800 sacks of these potatoes were also mis-labeled. They were labeled as "U. S. Grade No. 1", which was held to be a misbranding, under the law, because of their defective condition. Also taken into custody were onions -- 500 sacks of onions, below the represented grade.

Canned foods seized included canned cherries, "diced" pears, peas, and tomatoes. They were substandard, and not labeled in accordance with the regulations for labeling substandard canned foods.

Other violations, in the "economic fraud" class, brought libel actions against field corn, sold as sweet corn; against cottonseed oil labeled "olive oil"; soybean oil represented as olive oil; mince meat, short in weight; vanilla extract, lacking in vanilla; many gallons of cocktail mixers, fruit punches, and the like, low in fruit juice; over a thousand bottles of a so-called "pure lemon juice," which was one-third added water; 1200 pounds of so-called "sliced seedling almonds," found to be apricot kernels; and nearly 22,000 pounds of oats, ground and pulverized. The oats contained barley hulls, rice bran, and a "foreign starchy material."

And one more economic fraud. (Our correspondent says she fell for one of these frauds one time -- and she's been mad about it ever since.) This economic fraud, removed from the market, involved over a thousand baskets of nut meats, each basket containing a hidden false bottom, more than half an inch deep.

Well, it does make you feel rather silly -- to find you've been so cleverly gyped.

Now shall we go into the list of drugs seized during January, or shall we wait until next time? I think we'd better postpone the drug report -- for I don't like to mix my food with drugs.

Next Monday, at this time, we'll have another report from the Federal Food and Drug Administration, which enforces the Federal Food and Drugs Act, popularly known as the Pure Food Law.
